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LETTER DATED 24 MAY 1993 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 20 May 1993 from Mr. Mohammed Said Al-Sahaf, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Iraq, concerning the negative practices and decisions adopted in the Sanctions Committee.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as an official document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Nizar HAMDOON
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex

Letter dated 20 May 1993 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to refer to my letter dated 11 May 1993, in which I appealed to you to intervene in an appropriate way to deal with and put a halt to the negative practices and decisions being adopted in the Sanctions Committee, which prevent the Iraqi people from obtaining the most elementary essential humanitarian and civilian needs. I find myself once again obliged to address you, because these practices and decisions on the part of the Sanctions Committee have become an infamous course of conduct followed by all the States represented on the Committee for the purpose of perpetuating their aggressive and shortsighted policies that are contrary to international laws and covenants and the purposes of the United Nations Charter.

The proceedings of the 92nd meeting of the Sanctions Committee, held on 22 April 1993, merit the adoption by you of a serious stand to demonstrate the extent of the injustice and wrong being done to the people of Iraq by these States, which are competing among themselves to obstruct and prevent the arrival of essential humanitarian and civilian items, on the basis of pretexts and arguments that have aroused much indignation from the other members of the Committee.

In a swift review of the requests that the Committee rejected at this meeting, we find the following:

1. Objection by the United States to 18 requests;

2. Objection by the United Kingdom to 12 requests;

3. Objection by France to 5 requests;

4. Objection by Japan to 2 requests.

This is in addition to putting numerous other requests on hold or deferring them on various pretexts such as asking about the identity of the end-user, the completion of information or the purpose for which they would be used.

Iraq submitted a request that Iraqi Airways be authorized to make special flights to carry approximately 2,000 pilgrims to Makkah. This request was based on humanitarian circumstances that should be respected in view of the distance between Iraq and Makkah. However, the Committee rejected this request because the above-mentioned States objected. The Committee also rejected another Iraqi request for the return of Iraqi aircraft to Baghdad for maintenance operations. They have been grounded for more than two years and have sustained serious damage owing to lack of essential maintenance, in addition to the injuries sustained by the technical personnel.

The Committee's position on these two requests is arbitrary, unjust and a malicious injury to the feelings of all Muslims. It does not transcend the framework of the tendentious political objectives of these States.

The unjustified and baseless objections that issued from the Committee at its last meeting constitute a continuation of the policy of some of its members aimed at inflicting injury on a whole people and depriving it of the most elementary fundamental human and civil rights. We place on the Governments of these States the full responsibility for their violation of international laws and covenants.

Below are some further examples of the rejection of Iraqi requests during this meeting:

1. The Committee rejected Iraqi requests for the supply of textiles and cotton piece goods because of the objection of the United States and United Kingdom representatives on the grounds that these items constituted an input to Iraqi industry.

2. The Committee rejected a number of requests for the supply of polythene to private and government companies because of the objection of the United States and United Kingdom representatives on the grounds that it constituted an industrial input. (The quantities in question are only a small percentage of Iraq's actual requirement, but the Committee nevertheless rejected the request.)

3. The Committee rejected a number of requests for supplying Iraqi merchants with quantities of filters, glass and second-hand tyres for cars because of the objection of the French representative on the grounds that they would be used for private vehicles.

4. The Committee rejected a number of requests for the supply to Iraq of quantities of materials for making children's clothing because of the objection of the United States representative on the grounds that they constituted an input to Iraqi industry.

5. The Committee rejected a request for the supply to Iraq of quantities of quilt covers because of the objection of the United States and French representatives on the grounds that they constituted an input to Iraqi industry.

6. The Committee rejected a number of requests for the supply of quantities of glue to Iraqi merchants because of the objection of the United States and United Kingdom representatives on the grounds that it constituted an input to Iraqi industry.

The practices of these States for which the Sanctions Committee is being used as a cover are but an expression of political positions hostile to Iraq and the proud Iraqi people and as remote as could be from the principles of international legitimacy and the United Nations Charter, especially the principle of justice and fairness.

In conclusion, I request you to exercise your good offices to put a halt to these practices, which conflict with all humanitarian considerations and the principles of justice and fairness. I request you to have this letter circulated as an official document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mohammed Said AL-SAHAF
Minister for Foreign Affairs
of the Republic of Iraq
20 May 1993